MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

20 MAY 1982

Israel

No-Confidence Motion -- The Knesset defeated the Alignment's no-confidence motion by 58 to 57 votes, Knesset Speaker Menahem Savidor told MK's in an announcement broadcast live by IDF radio. The two Telem MK's and one Tehiya MK abstained, according to the roll call of the vote broadcast by the radio. The government will not attempt to coopt Tehiya and possibly Telem into the coalition, the radio said. Jerusalem radio said that in previous contacts with the government, Tehiya had demanded that Jerusalem should not be an issue for discussion in any negotiations and that the settlement program in Judaea and Samaria should be accelerated.

In his speech, which concluded the debate and was broadcast live by the radio, Prime Minister Menahem Begin accused the Alignment of "dirty tactics" but predicted that the government would not fall. After the vote, Begin said Labor Party Chairman Shim'on Peres' political career is now coming to an end since the Labor Party will not forgive him for failure, the radio reported. However, in an IDF radio interview, Peres denied the Alignment had failed to obtain its objective. The Alignment had succeeded in its aim of raising the economic issue, Peres said, and had never expected to win the no-confidence vote.

Location of Embassies -- Prime Minister Begin has appealed to all democratic nations to follow Costa Rica's example and establish their embassies in Jerusalem, the Jerusalem POST reported. Meanwhile, Zaire's ambassador in Brussels disclosed that his country's embassy will be situated in Tel Aviv and criticized whoever had announced it would be located in Jerusalem, according to Jerusalem radio. Following the Zairian decision to resume ties with Israel, Tunisia has recalled its ambassador in Kinshasa for consultations, AFP noted.

Relations With U.S. — In a reply message to Prime Minister Begin, U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig expressed understanding for Israel's position on the cease-fire along the northern border and praised Israel's restraint, Jerusalem radio reported.

Tel Aviv's YOMAN HASHAVU'A claimed that the U.S. consul in east Jerusalem has been negotiating with PLO supporters in Judaea and Samaria and has boycotted moderate Palestinian leaders who have reservations about the PLO.

PLO-Lebanon

VOP on Cease-Fire -- A commentary by the clandestine Voice of Palestine radio said the forthcoming visit to the Middle East of U.S. envoy Morris Draper is aimed at introducing Israel's arbitrary interpretation of the cease-fire in south Lebanon. When the PLO responded to UN calls for a cease-fire in July 1981, it was clear this commitment to cease fire would not be applied outside the southern border of Lebanon and would not limit the PLO's inalienable right to resist occupation and exercise legitimate struggle, the radio said. If Israel abides by the correct interpretation of the cease-fire, the PLO will continue to adhere to it without this affecting the PLO's right to resist the enemy on all levels, particularly in the occupied homeland, the radio concluded.

Mines in Border Strip -- A militia patrol in Maj Sa'd Haddad's southern border enclave discovered two newly-laid antitank mines near Marj 'Uyun, Jerusalem radio reported on 20 May.

Iran-Iraq Conflict

Iranian troops repulsed a "last-ditch" attack by Iraqi forces along the northern Khuzestan border and inflicted heavy losses on armored and mechnized units of Iraq's 12th and 9th Divisions, Tehran radio reported. A later radio report claimed that 45 Iraqi tanks and

personnel carriers were destroyed during the attack. According to a military communique broadcast by Tehran radio, three Iraqi planes were shot down near Abadan on 18 May and another three were shot down in the Khorramshahr region on 19 May.

An Iraqi military spokesman, in a statement carried by INA, claimed that 658 Iranians were killed and 18 tanks were destroyed during an Iraqi attack on Iranian positions north of Khorramshahr. An Iraqi commander disclosed that the Iranians have pulled back their armored units from the frontlines west of the Karun River and north of Khorramshahr, INA reported. Since 30 April, 35,793 Iranians have been killed and 480 tanks and 31 planes were destroyed, according to a report by the weekly magazine ALIF BA' cited by INA.

Saudi Arabia

The Gulf countries warn Iran against the consequences of taking any action against them and warn it that any such step "will cost it dearly," a Riyadh radio commentary declared. The commentary said the Gulf countries understand the meaning of collective responsibility when a GCC member is threatened. It added that the Iranian leaders are fooling themselves if they believe the GCC states fear them or if they believe the GCC will wait for Iran to start implementing its threats against them.

Iran

Revolution Court Prosecutor General Hoseyn Musavi-Tabrizi revealed that former Foreign Minister Sadeq Qotbzadeh and a number of other persons will be tried before the end of June for their alleged involvement in a plot to kill Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni and seize power, AFP reported citing ETTELA'AT. The defendants will appear before a revolution court presided over by a military judge. Meanwhile, the clandestine Voice of Iran radio reported that Qotbzadeh tried to commit suicide on 15 May.

Egypt

Syrian Airlines Delegation -- A Syrian Airlines delegation is now in Cairo to discuss the resumption of flights between Damascus and Cairo, the Jordanian paper AL-'UFUQ AL-IQTISADI reported. Monitored Egyptian media have not reported the presence of the Syrian delegation.

'Ali Remarks -- Egypt wants a prompt end to the Iran-Iraq war, Foreign Minister Kamal Hasan 'Ali declared in an interview with the London paper ASH-SHARQ AL-AWSAT reported by MENA. 'Ali added that Egypt views the Gulf states as its first strategic line of defense and considers these countries essential to its security. Asked what Egypt could do in the event Iran defeats Iraq, 'Ali said Egypt can give Iraq a lot of assistance if requested. The report did not specify the nature of the assistance.

Return of AL-AHALI -- PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat sent a message to Khalid Muhyi ad-Din, secretary general of the Egyptian National Progressive Union Group, and to the editorial staff of the Egyptian newspaper AL-AHALI congratulating them on the paper's reappearance, Voice of Palestine radio reported. 'Arafat said the PLO had looked forward with hope to the reappearance of "our struggling newspaper" as a weapon added to the arsenal of the Arab liberation forces.

Sudan

First Vice President 'Umar Muhammad at-Tayyib has called for an Arab summit conference to discuss Arab problems, above all the liberation of the occupied Arab territories and the achievement of Palestinian rights, MENA reported citing a statement by At-Tayyib to the Egyptian paper AL-AKHBAR. At-Tayyib said Sudan is conducting serious contacts with the Arab states with a view toward convening an Arab summit conference, that would be attended by Egypt, as soon as possible.

DAILY REPORT

South Asia

Vol VIII No 098

20 May 1982

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KESHTMAND CHAIRS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS SESSION

LD171716 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 17 May 82

[Text] Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, chairman of the DRA Council of Ministers, chaired a general Council of Ministers session this morning at the Council of Ministers headquarters. The session began with the playing of the DRA national anthem.

According to the Council of Ministers' previously prepared work program and agenda, Dr Khalil Ahmad Abawi, vice chairman of the Council of Ministers and president of the State Planning Committee, presented a report on the economic and social development plan for 1981-1982. The report was positively evaluated. Then Dr Mehraboddin Paktiawal, general director of the DRA State Bank, gave a report on the currency situation in the country. The Council of Ministers approved the report.

Assistant Attorney General Mohammad (Akram 'Abqari) presented a Ministry of Justice report on the draft of laws, provisions and charters. The Ministry of Justice presented the general session of the Council of Ministers with the drafts for 24 paragraphs of laws and appendices to laws as well as the drafts of provisions and charters. The drafts have been prepared and organized in accordance with the joint cooperation of the relevant ministries, the DRA Basic Principles, the law of the DRA Council of Ministers, other laws of the country and the instructions of the PDPA and with consideration to the decrees of the Revolutionary Council Presidium.

After consideration, it was decided that, in accordance with Article 47 of the DRA Basic Principles, the draft of the relevant laws and their appendices would be submitted to the DRA Presidium for final approval and instructions; the draft laws and provisions approved were sent to the OFFICIAL GAZETTE for publication.

Appropriate decisions were made concerning topics discussed in the general session of the Council of Ministers. A number of provisions which had previously been decided on in the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers were approved.

In addition, the Council of Ministers approved the appointment of Dr Asadollah Habib as rector of Kabul University.

The session ended around noon with the playing of the DRA national anthem.

RELATIONS WITH GDR, KARMAL VISIT LAUDED

GF200525 Kabul in Urdu to South Asia 1330 GMT 19 May 82

[Untitled commentary]

[Excerpt] At an invitation from high-ranking party and government officials of the German Democratic Republic, Babrak Karmal, the secretary general of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and chairman of the Revolutionary Council of the DRA, is currently paying a friendly and official visit to Berlin.

The visit of the official Afghan delegation led by Babrak Karmal is an important landmark in the history of friendship between the two countries. Afghanistan has traditionally had friendly relations with the GDR. However, soon after the April Revolution in Afghanistan, Afghan-GDR relations were expanded through nonresident ambassadors. Later, when the government of the toilers was established in the DRA, these relations entered a new phase. Soon after, diplomatic relations were not only upgraded, but the ruling parties in both countries further developed their international relations greatly.

Today, the complete solidarity of the GDR with the Afghan people's struggle against international imperialism led by the United States, Chinese hegemonism and regional conservative regimes engaged in undeclared war against the people of Afghanistan is a matter of extraordinary importance. During its second session, the joint DRA-GDR economic commission, which is a symbol of friendly and fraternal relations between the two countries, paved the way for greater cooperation among the toiling people, social organizations and governments of both countries in the economic, scientific and technology fields.

Now, the peoples of both countries consider that their cooperation promotes amity in the interest of peace and international security, and they also believed that the present visit of the high-level party and government delegation of the DRA to the GDR is a very important landmark in the history of friendly relations between these two countries.

JUSTICE MINISTER RETURNS FROM USSR TALKS

LD191828 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 19 May 82

[Text] 'Abdol Wahab Safi, minister of justice and attorney general, returned home today after an official and friendly visit to the Soviet Union, during which he held talks with Soviet officials on improving cooperation between the two countries.

NEW PUBLIC HEALTH MINISTER APPOINTED

LD161722 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 16 May 82

[Decree issued by the Revolutionary Council Presidium on 15 May]

[Text] In accordance with the provisions of Article 44 of the Basic Principles of the DRA, the Revolutionary Council Presidium has approved the following:

Dr Mohammad Nabi Kamyar is to be appointed minister of public health.

[Signed] Babrak Karmal, chairman of the DRA Revolutionary Council Presidium

KABUL CITIZENS ASKED TO OBSERVE CURFEW

LD192240 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1630 GMT 19 May 82

[Text] Esteemed citizens of Kabul are most respectfully asked to observe night curfew from 2200-0330.

REBELS ROUTED IN BADAKHSHAN, FARYAB PROVINCES

GF200444 Kabul in Urdu to South Asia 1330 GMT 19 May 82

[Text] According to a report from the security headquarters in Badakhshan Province, [words indistinct] with the cooperation of the local population and the security forces, a counter-revolutionary band of (?60) persons was routed and their leaders arrested. The source adds that several kinds of arms were recovered from the band members.

Similarly, in [name indistinct] District of Faryab Province, a group of terrorists which was disturbing the peaceful lives of the local toilers has been routed. Security force sources report that seven members of the terrorist group were arrested and their arms were confiscated.

TALKS WITH PRC DELEGATION CONCLUDE IN DELHI

Second Day of Talks

BK181400 Delhi Overseas Service in English 1330 GMT 18 May 82

[Text] The four working groups of the official-level talks between India and China had further discussions for the second day in New Delhi today. A spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry told newsmen that one of the features of some of these groups is that they visited a few ministries and organizations concerning their subjects of discussion. He said the groups on border, trade and economic affairs, science and technology and culture will be meeting for the next 2 days. Discussions at these working groups will be reviewed at a plenary at the end of the talks.

The spokesman also confirmed that the special envoy of China, Fu Hao, will be meeting External Affairs Minister Narasimha Rao on Thursday.

Third Day of Talks

BK191321 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 19 May 82

[Text] The four working groups at the official-level talks between India and China continued their discussions in New Delhi for the third day today. An official spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry told newsmen that the working group on border issue discussed it indepth and in businesslike manner. He said that it is expected that the talks will conclude tomorrow.

Talks End 20 May

BK200859 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 20 May 82

[Text] The bilateral official-level talks between India and China ended in New Delhi this morning. The two sides met in plenary to review the 4-day discussions of the working groups on border, trade and economic affairs, science and technology and culture. Immediately after the plenary, leader of the Chinese delegation Fu Hao met External Affairs Minister Narasimha Rao. He was with him for about 1/2 hour.

Asked by newsmen whether there has been any breakthrough on the boundary questions, Fu said everything has worked according to plan.

Leader of the Indian side, Eric Gonsalves, told the Akashvani correspondent that the two sides will be meeting in the afternoon for a brief wrapup session.

EXPRESS VIEWS GANDHI'S UPCOMING U.S. VISIT

BK191702 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 14 May 82 p 6

[Editorial: "Mission to Washington"]

[Text] Mrs Gandhi's decision to visit the USA towards the end of July, after the confusion caused by the sudden postponement of her trips to the two super power capitals, is to be welcomed for more reasons than one. It will give Mrs Gandhi and President Reagan their first opportunity to discuss frankly the problems that are at the heart of Indo-U.S. differences. (Their earlier meeting at Cancun was hardly in the nature of an in-depth discussion of problems). Secondly, the very fact that the two leaders will be meeting in Washington implies some interest on the American side to try to respect Indian sensitivities up to a point.

It would be futile to expect dramatic results from Mrs Gandhi's visit. Its usefulness will lie in clearing the air and a deeper understanding by each side of the other's views.

It is characteristic of Indo-U.S. relations that Washington's relationship with third countries impinges on the bilateral equation to a considerable degree. The Americans can make the same point in India's case. The value of the Washington meetings will, therefore, lie in how frankly the two leaders detail their assessments of the region and the world. One of the sore points with Americans is that however much India disagrees with U.S. policies, it should not doubt Washington's motives.

Mrs Gandhi has stopped using the USA as a whipping boy for some time, election rhetoric apart. Indeed, her recent criticism of U.S. policies has been on the general plane, often coupled with sorrow that India was misunderstood. There is no guarantee that the ruling party's politicians will not revert to their earlier form, but the alacrity and speed with which Mrs Gandhi accepted President Reagan's invitation would suggest a measure of eagerness to put across Indian views to the U.S. establishment at the highest level.

Since Indo-Pakistani relations, as also the Pakistan-U.S. equation, will inevitably figure in Mrs Gandhi's talks in Washington, it would be reasonable to assume that the stalled talks between Delhi and Islamabad will be resumed before the end of July.

INDIAN ROLE IN NONALIGNED MOVEMENT VIEWED

BK191525 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 13 May 82 p 6

[Editorial: "India and the World"]

[Text] There are overriding compulsions to go ahead with the summit meeting of the non-aligned in Bahgdad in September, despite the Iranian objections. Locked as Iran is in a war with Iraq, a war in which the Khomeyni regime has done surprisingly well against the background of an unfinished revolution at home, Tehran has objections to going to the capital of the "enemy" for the summit. But the better part of the Nonaligned Movement has other reasons for sticking to the Baghdad date, principally to bring to an end Cuba's presidency. The Nonaligned Movement is divided on ideological lines as well as by the historical and regional quarrels of its members. But there is overwhelming majority for the view, shared by India and Yugoslavia, that the effectiveness of the movement and its credibility are destroyed by having a Soviet proxy as its current titular head.

India's reported bid for hosting the eighth summit has to be viewed against Mrs Gandhi's interest in putting India back on the world map. This is apparent from her new enthusiasm for the Commonwealth as also for using the United Nations forum to greater advantage. The rationale behind the new Indian interest in world fora lies in the belief that in an increasingly dangerous world, the country has no option but to participate in multilateral organisations' deliberations with greater verve to be able to influence decisions up to a point. Therefore, it stands to reason that the Nonaligned Movement, co-founded by India, should gather in Delhi for a summit.

What other forms this more assertive role in world affairs will take remains to be seen. But one likely result will be greater Indian independence from the Soviet view of the world. India has been careful to respect Soviet sensitivities, on Afghanistan as on other issues, but it will obviously be easier for New Delhi to strike up a more independent posture on world problems if it also expresses the views of other nonaligned countries.

South-South deliberations, in the political and economic fields, are an essential part of the North-South question. To the extent the developing countries can agree among themselves, to that extent will they be able to make their points effectively.

FOREIGN POLICY ON FALKLANDS ISSUE ANALYZED

BK200700 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 12 May 82 p 6

[Article by S. Nihal Singh on "Winds of Change in Foreign Policy"]

[Text] The crisis over the Falklands, which has involved Britain, Argentina, the United States of America and, in a manner of speaking, the Soviet Union, provides an interesting case study of the evolution of Indian foreign policy. Far from shouting from the housetops about imperialist Britain trying to retain a colony by force, the Indian reaction has been muted and, officially, India went to the extent of expressing "regret" over the initial Argentinian action which provoked the crisis.

There are, of course, special circumstances which helped India adopt a somewhat detached attitude to the South Atlantic drama. Few would disagree with the proposition that Britain has no right to be in the Falklands in perpetuity merely because it conquered them nearly 150 years ago. But the overwhelming proportion of its tiny population is of British descent, although now in the category of second class British citizens.

On the basis of continuity, Argentina would seem to have greater claim to the islands, a claim recognised by the non-aligned world. But the Argentinian action in seizing the islands by force behind Britain's back as it were, without the microscopic local population showing any interest in union with Argentina, seemed to most countries totally unjustified and a rather unnecessary exercise in one-upmanship.

There were also other factors influencing India. Mrs Gandhi had just returned from a successful visit to Britain before the crisis broke and was loath to sacrifice a deepening Indo-British relationship for striking up postures over a crisis involving a remote part of the world. Besides, the nature of the Argentinian regime has not endeared itself to most of the world. And to reinforce these points, British diplomacy has been particularly successful in presenting Whitehall's case.

Given this setting the Indian response is nevertheless remarkable for making a departure from a standard reaction to a quarrel involving a non-aligned country and an old imperialist power. To an extent, India has shown that it can assert its interests, in this case linked to not identifying itself with the Argentinian action, even though it would arouse the ire of a section of the non-aligned world (non-alignment, of course, comes in many shades and colours). Besides, New Delhi no longer feels the compulsion to pronounce its wisdom on every conceivable issue in the world.

This does not mean that India intends to give short shrift to non-alignment. It is in the practice of it, rather than adherence to the creed, that is the touchstone of Indian policy. Non-alignment has, in any case, proved a sufficiently flexible policy to encompass a country's interests of the permanent or more immediate variety. In the early phase of Mrs Gandhi's present tenure she and her foreign minister sought to justify the country's special relationship with the Soviet Union by declaring that nonalignment did not imply equidistance from the two super powers.

The trend towards a more hard-headed foreign policy has not come about suddenly. There have been straws in the wind -- in the unhurried progress towards better relations with China, in not taking differences with the Reagan administration to a point that would preclude a happier relationship in the future. There have been aberrations too. No official Indian spokesman has offered a convincing explanation of India's recognition of the Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea and Indian reactions to Pakistani moves are still tinged with emotional overtones.

But the Falklands issue is something of a symbol of the crystallisation of an evolving Indian policy. It represents the jettisoning of a part of the Nehru baggage in foreign policy though Indian spokesmen will continue to swear by the Nehru legacy; particular interest groups like the communists have naturally a purpose in doing so.

It stands to reason that in a changing and evolving world, a country's foreign policy cannot remain stationary. It is difficult to act on this maxim in India for several reasons. Given the comprehension and knowledge of foreign affairs of our legislators, they feel more comfortable in chanting the mantras of a bygone age. Besides, against the historical background of the birth of nonalignment, the communists and those promoting foreign powers' interests find India a fertile soil in which to cultivate an anti-West, particularly anti-American, orientation.

To suggest that there is a change in Indian foreign policy is not to equate it with an anti-Soviet stance. Relations with the Soviet Union remain close while differences with the United States of America are many and varied. The significance of the shift in New Delhi lies in the recognition that divergent as Indian and US perceptions are, Indian objectives will be helped, rather than hindered, by engaging Washington in frank discussions.

If the primary objective of Indian foreign policy is to keep the region and, if possible, the Indian Ocean free of super power presence, it is a receding goal. Russian troops are digging in in Afghanistan, the United States of America has a new arms relationship with Pakistan and never has the Indian Ocean seen so many warships of the super powers in peacetime. And there is the American base at Diego Garcia which has lost some of its emotive power in India.

The point to determine is what diplomatic goals India should set itself to try to rectify a discouraging picture. Merely blaming one side for all the ills of the region and the world would serve little purpose. Although Indian compulsions to make gestures to Soviet sensitivities are understandable up to a point, they do not provide the answer to the Indian dilemma.

Besides, the Russians have demonstrated by marching into Afghanistan that their strategic interests in the region can diverge from India's. This should come as no surprise because a super power follows its own compulsions, even if they go against the interests of friends and allies. If the United States of America is less than sympathetic to India because the latter is not part of its strategic consensus, Russian action can also harm India.

There are no easy answers to these problems, except to clear the fog of emotion and cliches to view them as they are. The Indian reaction to the Falklands crisis is an indication that on occasion Indian policy-makers are clear-headed enough to set aside emotion and slogans to address themselves to the country's interests.

Ironically, in this instance, the British policy-makers, particularly Mrs Margaret Thatcher, can be faulted for giving way to emotionalism. True, the Argentinian surprise seizure of the Falklands touched a tender nerve of the aging British lion, but it is the task of a country's leadership to temper jingoist emotions, rather than to stoke them. And Britain has in the process lost a good foreign secretary, apart from military material in the South Atlantic.

On the Indian side, the handling of the Falklands issue is no guarantee that there will be no bouts of emotionalism and downright bungling in the pursuit of foreign policy goals. But it does hold out some promise of a more realistic policy tailored to India's needs, despite the omniscient "foreign hand" that seems to be the answer to politicians' prayers, particularly at election time.

If preaching is in the Indian tradition, the less of it our policy-makers do, the better it will be for the country.

USSR TO SUPPLY CRUDE; AGREEMENT SIGNED IN MOSCOW

BK191622 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 19 May 82

[Text] The Soviet Union is to supply 2.5 million tons of crude to India during this year. An agreement for this has been signed in Moscow. The Soviet Union has already agreed to supply 1.5 million tons of kerosene and 670,000 tons high speed diesel under another agreement.

India is also likely to sign an agreement with Saudi Arabia for import of crude soon.

MODERATE-TO-HEAVY POLLING IN ELECTIONS

BK191317 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 19 May 82

[Text] Moderate-to-heavy polling has been reported in the elections to the four state assemblies and byelections to 15 assembly and 6 Lok Sabha seats.

In West Bengal, 50 to 55 percent of about 300,000 voters are estimated to have cast their votes by late this afternoon. The polling was reported to be by and large peaceful.

Akashvani's correspondent, who visited several polling booths in Calcutta and 24 Paragana districts, reports that the polling has been peaceful. However, in East Calcutta two bombs were thrown at a booth this evening injuring one person. The incident, however, did not affect the polling.

According to the police at least four persons were injured in three violent incidents in Calcutta during the day.

In the rural areas of West Bengal, women voters turned out in large numbers.

Nirmal Sen Gupta, an independent candidate of Durgapur 1 assembly constituency who had been reported missing since Sunday [16 May] night, has been traced.

In Kerala, polling to the 140 assembly constituencies ended this evening without any major incident. According to reports 70 to 75 percent of the 13 million voters had exercised their franchise. The heaviest polling was reported from Nemom where former Chief Minister Karunakaran is involved in a seven-corner contest. Voters in the Peravur constituency in the state had the first opportunity of using electronic device.

In Himachal Pradesh, according to initial estimates 55 to 60 percent of the voters are reported to have cast their votes today.

In Haryana, 35 percent of votes have been cast by midday. No untoward incident has been reported from any polling station.

Chief Election Commissioner S.L. Sakhdhar has said that polling went off peacefully in all the states. He told newsmen in New Delhi today that more than 50 percent of votes were cast till this afternoon. He said he had received a report about one untoward incident in Hissar, Haryana. Ten booths were affected but normalcy was soon restored in eight of them. In the remaining two a repoll will be held.

Sakhdhar also said that despite a call for boycott given by some Naxalite elements in Krishnagar in West Bengal, polling went off smoothly there. Some armed miscreants had snatched the polling material from a booth in (Jhauguri) last night but it was promptly replaced and voting took place today.

CABINET MEETS TO DISCUSS DEVELOPMENTS AT FRONTS

LD192030 Tehran IRNA in English 1947 GMT 19 May 82

[Text] Tehran, 19 May (IRNA) -- The latest developments in the warfronts and social issues of the country were discussed in the Cabinet session this morning. The session was chaired by Prime Minister Musavi. The government spokesman, Ahmad Tavakkoli, speaking to an IRNA reporter after the meeting said during the session minister of defence, Colonel Mohammad Salimi, gave a report of the situation in the warfronts and achievements of the Islamic forces during the bayt al-moqaddas operations and said that some 4,000 sq. kms of Iranian lands have been recovered. Colonel Salimi also praised the high morale of the families of the martyrs.

The foreign affairs minister, 'Ali Akbar Velayati, also reported to the Cabinet about the situation of the region and the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, and the division that has been created among the members of the council. The foreign affairs minister hoped that with the victories of the Islamic Republic's forces in the warfronts, Iran would become successful in the foreign policy theatre.

ARMED FORCES JOINT STAFF COMMUNIQUE 912

LD191738 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 19 May 82

[Communique No 912 of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. We hereby inform the dear and Muslim compatriots about the outcome of the battles and self-sacrifices of the fighters of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the conditions on the battlefronts of the war imposed upon Iran:

The self-sacrificing and heroic pilots and the aware and vigilant personnel of the anti-aircraft units of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran during the last 24 hours performed their functions to the utmost by destroying and repulsing the violating planes of the aggressive Iraqi Armed Forces and by establishing complete air superiority in all the skies of the war zones, giving full support to the fighting units of the ground forces and carrying out logistic missions and air transport.

At 1422, 1440, and 1703 yesterday they downed three intruding Iraqi planes around Abadan. At 1121, 1132 and 1214 today they also downed three more planes of Saddam's mercenary armed forces in the Khorramshahr region.

During the past 24 hours, fighting and exchange of fire continued along the western fronts of the country, especially in the Salehabad, Sumar, Gilan-e Gharb and Sar-e Pol-e Zahab regions. The heavy-artillery fire of the ground forces over the positions of the forces of Saddam stopped their activities and operations and destroyed one command post, one tank, one antiaircraft gun, one 106-mm gun, one 82-mm mortar, one truck and a number of supply depots. More than 20 of the Iraqi Ba'thist mercenaries were killed or wounded.

In the Panjwin region in Iraq, the fire of our powerful forces inflicted considerable losses and casualties upon the forces of Saddam.

On the Abadan front, the heroic forces of the gendarmerie opened fire over the positions of the forces of Saddam on the other side of the Arvand Rud and succeeded in silencing enemy fire, destroying five of their trenches and fuel depots in the Al-Faw region and killing a number of the aggressive Iraqi forces.

During the past 24 hours, the mercenaries of Saddam continued their brutal activities and brought the residential parts of Abadan under the fire of their long-range artillery.

IRANIAN FORCES STOP IRAQI 'LAST-DITCH MOVE'

LD191158 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 19 May 82

[Text] According to the latest report just now received from the Karbala' central headquarters, the joint command headquarters of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, following the last-ditch move by the disintegrating forces of Saddam's Zionist regime at 0530 today on the 8th and 19th fronts along the northern Khuzestan border belt, valiant combatants of Islam, accomplishing a vigorous stopping action, succeeded in inflicting heavy losses and casualties on the defeated enemy and in giving yet another lesson to the hirelings of international arrogance.

In these victorious actions, the Islamic army's warriors succeeded in inflicting heavy losses and casualties on the 46th Mechanized Brigade and 38th Armored Brigade of Iraq's 12th Division, as well as on the 14th Armored Brigade of Saddam's 9th Division. In addition, at least 30 tanks and armored personnel carriers belonging to the aggressors were set ablaze and destroyed.

In this morning's operations, which lasted until 1030, many members of the said brigades were killed. So far 100 of them have been counted. In these operations our victorious troops succeeded in capturing intact three enemy armored personnel carriers. In addition, many Iraqi troops were taken prisoner by Islam's mighty forces. So far a group of them has been evacuated behind the lines, while evacuation of others is continuing.

We wish to inform our martyr-nurturing nation that as soon as we receive further reports or a joint communique from the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, we shall make it available to the Islamic nation.

FOREIGN DIPLOMATS TAKEN ON TOUR OF HOVEYZEH

LD192118 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 19 May 82

[Excerpts] According to IRNA, foreign ambassadors, charges d'affaires and attaches today toured Hoveyzeh and viewed the evidence of Saddam's savage crimes. The envoys were warmly greeted by the inhabitants of Hoveyzeh. They arrived to the cheers of a large group of people who chanted the slogan "Death to America" and burned an American flag.

The diplomatic delegation which toured Hoveyzeh included ambassadors, charges d'affaires and attaches of the Embassies of Syria, Libya, North Korea, the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic, Yugoslavia, Lebanon, France, Switzerland, Portugal, Denmark, Mauritania, Pakistan, West Germany, East Germany, Brazil, Bulgaria, Holland, Japan, North Yemen, Sweden, Hungary, Algeria, the Philippines, Italy, India, the Soviet Union, Romania, Colombia and Indonesia.

The diplomats were accompanied by the deputy foreign minister.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S JERUSALEM SESSION CONDEMNED

LD200922 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 20 May 82

[Statement issued by the Foreign Affairs Ministry; date not given]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Despite the strong reaction and the repeated protests of the Muslims and liberated people of the world against the provocative and dubious political decision of the Council of Europe Political Committee to hold its session in occupied Jerusalem, the representatives of world arrogance, in order to renew their convenant with Zionism and in order to openly and directly insult the sanctities of 1 billion world Muslims eventually held their committee session in the first qiblah of the Muslims.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while strongly condemning the Council of Europe's provocative decision which has been made purely in order to encourage the Zionist regime to continue its policies of aggression and expansionism, with disregard for the undeniable rights of the Palestinian people, asks all Muslim nations to counteract such shameful acts with vigilance and with understanding of their Islamic responsibilities using all their capabilities.

They should make the participants in that meeting held in the usurped Jerusalem understand that their actions directed toward supporting the Zionist regime will not be left unanswered.

JAPANESE COMPANY TO RESUME OIL PROJECT TALKS

LD192050 Tehran IRNA in English 1937 GMT 19 May 82

[Text] Tehran, 19 May (IRNA) -- The Japanese-Iran Chemical Development Company (ICDC) has decided to send a team to Tehran for further negotiations with officials of Iran's national petrochemical company in the continuation of the dispute for the completion of the petrochemical project in Imam Khomeyni Port, southern Iran.

This will be the fourth attempt to come to a settlement over the Iran-Japan petrochemical project [words indistinct] Japanese company several times illegally abandoned the project, most recently under the pretexts of the Iraqi-imposed war. The project, 85 percent of which is completed which was originally to be operational by January 1980, was initially arranged by the defunct shah back in April 1973.

However, the Japanese firm, taking advantage of events in Iran, tried to get out of the contract when it realised it would not reap the extravagant benefits enjoyed during the former regime, such as cheap labour from the Philippines, as Iran exerted its just rights in the already grossly over priced project.

Despite this Iran wanted the Japanese company to complete the project and was even willing to grant low interest loans to meet the additional capital of the investment in return for a guarantee for completion of the project.

However the last round of talks in February resulted in a stalemate as the Japanese partner refused to accept Iran's terms.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICIAL LEAVES FOR MOSCOW

LD191810 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 19 May 82

[Text] The head of the Foreign Affairs Ministry's second political bureau [as heard] left Tehran for Moscow today on an inspection tour of Iranian missions in East European countries.

TAVAKKOLI, BANGLADESH ENVOY DISCUSS LABOR ISSUES

LD181720 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 18 May 82

[Text] According to a Central News Unit report, the Bangladesh ambassador this morning met with Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Mr Ahmad Tavakkoli at the ministry building and talked about the expansion of relations between the two countries on labor issues. On the question of manpower, the minister of labor and social affairs referred to the expulsion of foreign experts from the country after the victory of the Islamic revolution and said that in this short period we have tried to provide our manpower through the use of training of the God-given abilities of our workers, technicians and engineers. In this we have been relatively successful.

However, at the same time, we still need the cooperation of foreign experts in certain fields; nevertheless, we prefer, until we achieve self-sufficiency, to provide for our needs in the first instance from Muslim countries, and in the second instance from the Third World countries.

The minister of labor and social affairs added that we are currently drawing up plans for the next 20 years so that we can achieve self-sufficiency, first in agriculture in the first instance and then in industry, and we are attempting to attract people's investments so we can create productive work for our youths.

The Bangladesh ambassador expressed the readiness of his country to provide Iranian manpower needs in the fields of jute industries, paper, fisheries, electricity, agricultural research, health and hygiene. He also expressed Bangladesh's readiness to use Iranian experts and experienced technicians in the fields of oil industry and craft trades. He asked for the expansion of mutual relations in the field of labor and workers issues and the drawing up of a protocol in this regard.

CLANDESTINE ON DISCONTENT OF IRANIAN WORKERS

GF180741 (Clandestine) Free Voice of Iran in Persian to Iran 1500 GMT 17 May 82

[Text] For our listeners in Pakistan, Turkey and other regions near our country who wish to get more news of Iran, we broadcast special reports:

The Free Voice of Iran correspondent reports from Tehran that a wave of discontent exists among government employees and workers in factories that are still open. According to this report, the regime's oil minister has ordered the purging committee to purge the oil industry workers. Following the purge they would be retired or [word indistinct] and be replaced by those who are followers of the line.

The report adds that industry workers and government employees do not have job security. Cutting off food ration coupons and (?housing allowances), creating an atmosphere of suffocation among the employees and workers, the continuing high cost of living and reduction in fringe benefits of low-income workers are some of the reasons for the discontent of Iranian workers and employees who have not lost their sense of understanding and notice the cheating and violations by the antinationalist regime of the mullahs.

In the Pars electronic factory the workers' (?food ration) has been cut. In southern custom offices 150 employees have been fired. Production has declined in industrial units compared to previous months. The cut of the annual bonus for exceptional workers of the Tehran Bus Company has caused also severe protests.

During the past few months a number of factories have been closed because of a lack of raw materials and the future of their employees and workers is not clear.

Our correspondent adds that the Ministry of Labor of the so-called Islamic Republic has refused to help the unemployed workers and the workers of those factories that have been closed or going to be closed very soon. The Ministry of Labor, arguing that the government's treasury is empty, meanwhile allocates a huge budget for investigating believers, spying and purging of aware intellectual and nationalist workers. All these actions have caused discontent among workers and employees.

At a time that our compatriots are using every opportunity to write antiregime slogans on the walls of the cities of our country -- such as "Death to Khomeyni," "(?Mullahs are condemned)," "Down with the Islamic Republic" and so on -- Tehran municipality recently asked the people of the capital to cooperate with the municipality to clean those so-called deviational and [words indistinct] cities. But the people of Tehran refused to cooperate with the municipality.

According to the Free Voice of Iran correspondent in Tehran, following the people's refusal, Tehran municipality started cleaning of some parts but the people, especially the youths, once again wrote antiregime slogans on the walls. One of the interesting slogans written on Tehran's Shah Reza Avenue is: "Cooperation with the regime is cooperation with the United States. People, chant more slogans."

REYSHAHRI BRIEFS KHAMENE'I ON QOTBZADEH PLOT

LD181112 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 May 82

[Text] According to a Central News Unit report, Mohammad Reyshahri, chief of the Islamic Revolution Military Tribunal, met President Khamene'i this morning. During the meeting Reyshahri briefed the president on the recent attempted plot perpetrated by former Foreign Minister Qotbzadeh with the blessing of Ayatollah Shari'atmadari. President Khamene'i then made some comments on the matter.

REPENTANT PRISONERS AMNESTIED BY KHOMEYNI

LD181738 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 18 May 82

[Text] According to IRNA, 391 repentant prisoners from the minigroups in Tabriz, who have expressed regret for their past deeds and have returned to the warm embrace of Islam following guidance from the officials of the Islamic Revolution Court of Tabriz, were covered by the decree of amnesty by the imam of the nation. This afternoon, 75 of them were freed from prison in a special ceremony and the rest of them had their sentences commuted.

CLANDESTINE REPORTS ON SECRET EXECUTIONS

GF160858 (Clandestine) Free Voice of Iran in Persian to Iran 1500 GMT 15 May 82

[Text] According to a Free Voice of Iran correspondent, secret executions of the opposition continue in the prisons of Khomeyni's regime. In the past 10 months the number of those executed or killed in the streets has reached 15,000.

According to our correspondent, hundreds of prisoners in Shiraz and Tehran were executed in the past few days. The Khomeyni regime has only announced the names of 18 of them. The report adds that on 12 and 26 March respectively 70 and 90 individuals were executed secretly in Evin Prison. Most of those executed were supporters of the Mojahedin-e Khalq. Amir Siavoshi, a student, and Gholam Reza Safari were among them. The 70 executed on 12 March were given 1 week to make a television appearance expressing their remorse. However, the group refused and the regime subsequently sent them to firing squads.

According to a statement published by the Mojahedin-e Khalq, around 400 have been executed in Mashhad and another 1,000 are about to be executed.

NVOI: OFFICIALS VIOLATING CONSTITUTION

TA181449 [Editorial Report] The clandestine National Voice of Iran in Persian to Iran at 1730 GMT on 17 May carried a commentary entitled: "Acts Which Damage Cohesion and Harmony Must Be Terminated."

It stated that Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, speaker of the Islamic Majlis, has said that it is this very cohesion and harmony that has led the enemy to abjectness. This is an undeniable fact. What has raised the hope of the true forces of the revolution and of every citizen is the constant reiteration of this fact by the leaders of the revolution and the high-ranking government figures of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

However, a painful fact which cannot but arouse the concern of the struggling Iranian people is nonimplementation by some of the Islamic Republic's Government figures of their own statements and beliefs. For example, one of the issues that aids in the consolidation of unity among the true forces is the self-same issue of the establishment of the rule of law. The violation of many of the Constitution's indisputable principles pertaining to the people's political, social and trade union freedoms is still continuing. The offices of the true revolutionary parties are still being occupied by a handful of unauthorized individuals, and pressure is still being exerted over the members of these parties and organizations. One can still see in many of our homeland's prisons innocent members of these parties and organizations that are faithful to the imam's and the revolution's popular and anti-imperialist line. An end has not been put to the dismissal of the members and followers of these parties and organizations from government organizations, and even from industrial and educational institutions. These acts cannot but cause damage to the unity, cohesion and harmony of the people.

When certain hands in the government's upper echelons do not allow the government figures' promises, pertaining to the maintenance of the indisputable freedoms of the people and the true revolutionary parties and organizations, and the establishment of the rule of law, to be implemented, it is natural that this situation cannot but undermine the people's confidence toward the authorities, and harms the people's cohesion and harmony. The fact is that one of the main elements that is very effective in undermining the nation's unity and cohesion is this very violation of the principles of the Constitution and lack of the rule of law in the country. The people expect the Islamic authorities to exert all their efforts toward putting an end to acts that are contrary to law and regulations.

AFP: BLACK BOX FROM BEN YAHIA PLANE FOUND

NC181702 Paris AFP In English 1655 GMT 18 May 82

[Text] Tehran, 18 May (AFP) -- The pilot's black box from the plane that crashed on May 3 near the Iranian-Turkish border, killing Algerian Foreign Minister Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia and 13 others, has been found, reliable sources here said today.

Algerian experts immediately took possession of the box, which records the pilot's conversations and is considered vital in determining the cause of the crash, the sources said.

Certain Iranian newspapers had affirmed that the box was found shortly after the crash, but reliable sources here denied those reports.

Iranian authorities have accused Iraq of shooting down the plane, but Iraq has denied those accusations.

An Iranian commission of inquiry and information from diplomatic sources has established that the Grumman G2 plane was shot down by a missile while Mr Ben Yahia was heading to Tehran in attempts to end the Iran-Iraq war.

Meanwhile, a team of Algerian experts which had been sent to Iran to investigate the crash found missile fragments, bearing both Cyrillic and English writing. The team left Tehran a number of days ago for Turkey to continue the investigation. Algerian authorities have refused any comment until the investigation has been completed.

Today, the Iranian daily ETTELA'AT said that identification of the "perpetrators' of "this crime" was "very important for Iran and will show that the war imposed by Iraq was not a war between Persians and Arabs, but a war between Islam and heresy."

Adding that the crash had been denounced by both Syria and Libya, the paper said, "it is now the turn of the brother country of Algeria to affirm its position, since it has witnesses and documents and this problem concerns it directly."